



U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Chairman

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News Advisory

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Head of BlackBerry Company Among Those Testifying at Patent Quality Enhancement Hearing Wednesday

What: Oversight Hearing entitled, "Patent Quality Enhancement in the Information-Based Economy"
Who: Subcommittee on Courts, the Internet, and Intellectual Property – Rep. Lamar S. Smith (R-Tex.), Chairman
When: 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 5, 2006
Where: 2141 Rayburn Building

Many are concerned about patent quality and its effect on the economy. Patents of questionable scope or validity waste valuable resources by inviting third-party challenges and ultimately discourage private-sector investment.

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED...

- The extent to which the quality of U.S.-issued patents has deteriorated in recent years and the resulting effect on the American economy.
- Are most patents issued by PTO of poor quality? What needs to be done on the front-end of the system to improve patent quality? Do examiners have sufficient time to research applications? Does the PTO need more funding?
- Should Congress create or designate special "patent courts" to adjudicate disputes?
- How can Congress improve administrative proceedings at the back-end of the system – through reexamination and post-grant opposition – to improve patent quality?
- Are high-tech companies singled-out for unfair treatment in patent lawsuits?

WITNESSES: The Honorable Jon Dudas, Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office; **Mr. Robert A. Stewart**, Director and Chief Patent Counsel of the Americas, UBS AG; **Mr. Jim Balsillie**, Chairman and Co-CEO, Research in Motion (RIM), manufacturers of the BlackBerry; **Mr. Mark Lemley**, William H. Neukom Professor of Law, Stanford Law School.

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